

Minutes for February 6, 2004 meeting

Virginia Latino Advisory Commission

PRESENT:

Ms. Lou Arnatt	Ms. Maribel Ramos
Richmond, VA	Richmond, VA
Ms. Beatriz Amberman	Ms. Gloria E. Ponce Rodriguez
Virginia Beach, VA	Norfolk, VA
Ms. Maricel Quintana Baker	Mr. Walter Tejada
Richmond, VA	Arlington, VA
Ms. Julia Torres Barden	Mr. Andres Tobar
Richmond, VA	Arlington, VA
Mr. Ricardo A. Cabellos	Mr. Michel Zajur
Arlington, VA	Richmond, VA
Mr. Pablo Julian Davis	PUBLIC:
Charlottesville, VA 22903	
	Claire Guthrie Gastanaga
Ms. Cecelia Espenoza	Rick Gonzalez
Fairfax, VA	
Mr. Jorge E. Figueredo	
Springfield, VA	
Ms. Leni Gonzalez	
Arlington, VA	
Ms. Tanya M. Gonzalez	
Richmond, VA	
Ms. Indira N. Moran	
Woodbridge, VA	
Mr. Esteban Nieto	
Dayton, VA	
Ms. Jenifer H. Nalli	
Fairfax, VA	

ABSENT:

Ms. Dannah C. Card
Pulaski, VA

Mr. Ricardo Castaneda
Harrisonburg, VA

Mr. George Crespo
Powhatan, VA

Ms. Veronica L. Donahue
Lonvinston, VA

Ms. Mary C. Littreal
Fries, VA

Mr. Craig G. Schwartz
Richmond, VA

Introduction by Chair Walter Tejada and Co-Chair Beatriz Amberman

- ▶ Went through approval of minutes from previous meeting, members made some changes.
 - W. Tejada – brought up the discussion of Interim Report that was submitted to Governor Mark R. Warner on December 15, 2003.
 - A. Tobar- ID Sub-Committee presented an exceptionally well done report but he thought we were just going to present concerns on the Interim report and not come up and submit recommendations.
 - W. Tejada - referred to the current laws that have been submitted by the Legislators and how that would affect issues within the ID Sub-Committee.
 - P. Davis – his concern is with the report that was submitted by the ID Sub-Committee, he agrees with the position of the MC, however he didn't have a good feeling about the process, regardless of the bills that were to be brought up at the GA/ He brought up 2 things: understood that initially the report was a preliminary report and would not make recommendations, and we are a Commission but doesn't think it's the case that a Committee makes this decision for the whole Commission. The Commission didn't have enough practical evidence, even though presentation was made. That part was a recommendation to the Governor.
 - B. Amberman – the report is something we wanted to present from you for the Governor. The group wanted a decision from the Commission during its presentation, everyone that belongs to that committee feels strongly about what was presented. The Committee is prepared to make this presentation, although understands all Committees will be on a different level. She is sitting here, to serve the Governor, to take a look at the needs of her community if this is a stressing issue then she is ready to take that step. Told the Governor that there will be members in the group that will make presentations on this issue.

- P. Davis – understood that what was in the report was a concern and what went into the report was a recommendation.
- A. Tobar- if Commission is going to be heard before legislation reaches the Gov's desk, then the Commission needs to take a vote regarding these issues. The Gov. will have a lot of bills reach his desk and we need to decide before then, we need to decide what we are going to ask for.
- L. Gonzalez – the reason for this Commission is to come up with recommendations to the Gov.
- P.Davis – asked Chair to explain further
- W. Tejada – everyone can express their ideas and opinions. Explained regarding the recommendations made saying that it was needed because of the legislation that came into effect on January 1, 2004. We can make recommendations, but understand that they are not binding. What we reflected in the report was what was discussed in the last meeting.
- P. Davis – will restate that all of us need to be careful in letting urgency affect the process that we go through, we need to be careful in decisions we make as a Commission.
- J. Figueredo – we need to establish a process where we go right to the point, vote on what we want to discuss and then move on.

► Discussion was brought up regarding why VLAC did not have reception before the meeting, to meet members of GA and distribute Interim Report:

- W. Tejada – we need to end discussion, need to separate roles of activism and members of the Commission. Who gets copy of report, not our job to do the Advocacy, this is a public document.
- A. Tobar – possible process that Committee can entertain, Business Committee will have a forum in different parts of the state, will the chairs of other Committees be providing forums etc? to the state or diff. communities.
- B. Amberman – for our part ID issues, we are pleased with report, there is a need to present the Gov with the information and ideas that we are preparing for this, but it is up to the Governor.
- W. Tejada – talking about the report to the Governor should be the follow up
- I. Moran – each Committee is on a different stage, lots to disseminate, we need to do research on all, some may be ready to go further and have forums, etc. Interim- sketch and not final report
- W. Tejada – has been asked by media folks to share information, and it is available
- R. Cabellos – is it available on line?
- I. Moran – Clarification for herself, is it public? When can we give it out and how can we give it out?
- J. Figueredo – we need to clarify for those joining a Commission for the first time.
- B. Amberman – after this Commission approves what is read, only after that does it become public.
- R. Cabellos – will we be translating it in Spanish?
- W. Tejada – do we want this Interim Report in Spanish?

Voted on whether or not Commission should have Interim Report available in Spanish. Voted and passed. Our recommendations of having this Interim report translated/ Motion made : to have a couple of people review the translation, ask the Governor to ask Interim Report translated and Commission review and then disseminate.

- P. Davis – offered to translate pro-bono
- B. Amberman - friendly amendment, convey security that this Commission is prepared to work and use our own resources: Amendment : Recommend to the Governor if the resources are available, then we can pay someone to translate. If resources are not available then Commission should do the translation.
- W. Tejada: If the Governor has the resources then we will pay an individual. If the Commission does not have resources Pablo has volunteered to do the translation. We have established Committees and there were some that met today, we can help the Committee in brainstorming. ID issues, Healthcare Issues, Language Access, and Business Committee.
- G. Rodriguez – Law enforcement Committee and Education haven't had a chance to meet.

BUSINESS

- M. Zajur – the Business Sub-Committee met this morning with different agencies, decided to have at least two forums in NOVA and Tidewater VA. Will follow up in May, April and June and put report together.
- A. Tobar – thanked the Business Sub-Committee chair, pleased with the meeting. A study that was recently released, on how many latino business' there are, the report that was released says that only 1% are Latino owned businesses and 25% are African American owned business'
- B. Amberman - Tidewater will be there to help and advertise
- M. Zajur - business community has lots of input in order to provide serious levels of information
- A. Tobar - dates are still tentative and he may be out of the country

HEALTH COMMITTEE

- T. Gonzalez – they are working on painting a true picture of data that is available and making use of presentations of agencies, we will hold forums, disseminate information on the radio, Spanish TV, newspapers. Recommendations are to address service provider, will create preliminary timeline
- A. Tobar - health committee should also get face time with officials
- W. Tejada – final report due at the end of September but draft should be done by September 1st. It should take about a month to finalize report.

LANGUAGE ACCESS

- P. Davis – in our committee we identified a timeline. Our objective is to gather information on language access services, critical need of legal representation, what is the state of Language Access in VA. In February – we would like to recruit a member to the Committee, increase people power through an intern. Identify, list of things needed, collect study, data and examples of documents translated. Set schedule of meetings, meetings in diff. parts of the state, Arlington, Roanoke, Richmond and Norfolk – tentatively. March – collect info and hold first public meeting, continue with public meeting in April. Witness some interpretive situations, compile information. Have draft August 1st.
- L. Gonzalez – will work with Language Access Committee

IDENTIFICATION

- B. Amberman - make presentation to the Governor, what is his pleasure? Would he want us to go out through the State? Public forums?

- W. Tejada – ask if the Gov. can meet with them? Have his approval to make those presentations? 3 Issues on the table now? Need to move forward.
- J. Figueredo – concerned about certain bills introduced, because it will eliminate some of the work that the Commission is working on. Need to go broader and ask for other documents to be accepted not just MC. Extremely important to keep in mind, HB 157, SB 293, SB 521
- P. Vasquez – Senator O'Brien asked for a rewrite, working with FAIR and Attorney Gen. and would create a legal presence requirement for all state agencies, localities etc. DMV would determine whether those documents are sufficient. Prevent from accepting any foreign documents, (Comment from the Governor that this will not go through). No longer SB 293 only SB 521 and under Hanger's name.
- B. Amberman – documents to be used in other Countries by Americans, similar process in asking documents to be used in the US. Documentation on this issue is extensive.
- J. Figueredo – HB 570, SB 493 (Senator Mims), how are they going to know who is an illegal alien? Ex. Of an individual that was stopped by police and now in the process of deportation, we need support from both sides.
- W. Tejada – meeting w/ the Governor to advise him of our concern with this issue?
- R. Cabellos – could we write a letter to the Governor, advising him that this discussion took place?
- P. Vasquez – these bills must be addressed before they go further
- L. Arnatt – as the Governor's commission we are bi-partisan
- J. Figueredo – job is to advise the Governor, let the Governor know that bills have been introduced that will have an impact on our community
- P. Davis – documentation should be made available (all the additional documents that have been made available regarding the MC)
- W. Tejada – Yes we can write a letter to the Governor, and a letter later on, part of our meeting – not just meet and speak but leave behind documentation
- P. Vasquez – Gov. knows the documents are there and so does his policy staff.
- A. Tobar – we need a motion to vote on meeting with the Governor
- B. Amberman – difference in the report, between recommendations, yes there are particular recommendations to the Governor in this document. Present to the Governor documents that will back the info. already included in the Interim Report.
- P. Vasquez – most effective to work on those issues right now.
- W. Tejada – reevaluate the ID's Committee another strategy, to draft letter. Tobar withdrew his recommendation.
- B. Amberman – present the Gov. with both options, with letter and willing to meet.
- C. Espenosa – letter from the Chair to the Gov. and refer to the Interim Report/ Not the best use of the Gov.'s time to ask for meeting.
- W. Tejada – request to send letter to the Governor and motion and vote, all agreed to draft letter, Ricardo Cabellos, W. Tejada, B. Amberman, J. Figueredo, Indy Moran.

EDUCATION

- G. Rodriguez – education committee, she indicated that she conducted a presentation at the Virginia Beach Library on "No child Left Behind" in English and Spanish. She also mentioned that some of the concerns she felt that needed to be addressed were not mentioned on the interim report. Lastly, she extended an invitation on behalf of President, Marie V. McDemmond to hold VLAC's June 2nd meeting in the President's conference room on the campus of Norfolk State University.

- J. Figueredo – informed the Commission on HB 156 that has passed in the house, denying access to immigrant children to higher education and to have them kicked out of school if they don't have the proper documents.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

- C. Espenosa- hasn't had a chance to meet

HISPANIC REPRESENTATION

- Julia Torres Barden not present
- W. Tejada – Living wage – 4 jurisdictions, Charlottesville, Richmond, Alexandria, Arlington County and other localities are considering SB 290 SB 425? Denies living wage ordinance/ seeks to establish mandate minimum wage as established by Federal Government. 2002 study in NOVA of the minimum \$ needed to survive.
- Claire Guthrie Gastanaga Presentation – what issues are pending, when they will be of interest? 2 key periods, last week before crossover, and then more towards the end. Next week is a crucial time for legislation that affects the Latino community. Tuesday, Reid-HB 157, amendments floating around that are not in the system (if checking leg. site)/ Disparity study on women business owners and minority owned business'. Study is on line, (dept of minority business) www.dmb.state.va.us. Wednesday, two committee meetings, bills being amended behind the scene (ID bills). No foreign ID would be acceptable in the Commonwealth of VA. JLARC – staff draft, Del. Kirk Cox has some bills that will enhance the JLARC study, memo with a list of legislation. Percentages of immigrants in jail in VA, tend to be for less serious crimes, would be less than what is expected. CLEAR act/ HB 156 has gone out of the House, to the Senate – usually bills that crossover ahead of time will not get any attention until after the 17th.
- J. Figueredo – VACOLOA, Claire is the Lobbyist here in Richmond
- G. Rodriguez – Wilder performing arts center in June is a recommendation for the VA Beach meeting.
- I. Moran - spoke in front of house education committee, what can we do now that HB 156 is in the Senate.
- Claire Guthrie Gastanaga – Latino messenger publicized and article on how to become a good advocate, trying to communicate on a routine basis: timing is crucial, when is the best time to be here, how fast it moves.

HISPANIC REPRESENTATION

- J. Barden (arrived later in the meeting) – met with Kerry Doneley, Dem. Party, agreed to meet with her to ask them specific question on candidate recruitment process. Met w/ Del. Hall

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- P. Vasquez – Leni G. outreach director to be handling issues in NOVA
- W. Tejada – NALEO Conference
- M. Ramos – ITIN information from the IRS and the Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy (VOPA) is interested in presenting at our next meeting.
- P. Davis – event w/ First Lady Lisa Collis at UVA
- M. Zajur – event Claire's reception, US Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, legislative forum
- B. Amberman – Human Rights Commission honoring Beatriz on the 17th
- W. Tejada – next meeting April 2nd in Charlottesville at 2pm.